Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An   apparatus   for   establishing services that utilize policy-enabled resources in a communications network, comprising:

a first policy enforcement point (PEP) for identifying policy-enabled resources that are available and allocating requested policy-enabled resources to services;

a first network resource controller (NRC) for requesting from available policy-enabled resources any policy-enabled resources required to establish a particular service; and

a first resource policy layer (RPL) for provisioning, to a service being established, the policy-enabled resources allocated to that service‿ [[.]]

    whereby there is a decoupling of policy management from the management of policy-enabled resources.

2.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The   apparatus   as   defined   in   claim   1 wherein the first PEP comprises a plurality of virtual PEPs, each virtual PEP being <u>dynamically</u> associated to a respective service.

3.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the communications network comprises a plurality of domains, each of the first PEP, first NRC, and the first RPL may be associated with any one of the domains.

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4.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the communications network comprises a plurality of domains, the apparatus further comprises a second PEP associated with a different domain than the first PEP.

5.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the communications network comprises a plurality of domains, the apparatus further comprises a second NRC associated with a different domain than the first PEP.

6.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein the communications network comprises a plurality of domains, the apparatus further comprises a second RPL associated with a different domain than the first PEP.

7.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein each RPL comprises one or more PDPs

8.   (ORIGINAL)   The apparatus as defined in claim 1 wherein resource capability information descriptors are used for resource discovery and policy provisioning between entities.

9.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of establishing services that utilize policy-enabled resources in a communications network, comprising:

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identifying, at a first policy enforcement point (PEP) policy-enabled resources that are available and allocating requested policy-enabled resources to services;

requesting, from available policy-enabled resources at a first network resource controller (NRC) any policy-enabled resources required to establish a particular service; and

provisioning, to a service being established at a first resource policy layer (RPL), the policy-enabled resources allocated to that service‗ [[.]]

whereby there is a decoupling of policy management from the management of policy-enabled resources.

10. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 9 wherein the communications network comprises a plurality of domains, each of the first PEP, first NRC, and the first RPL may be associated with any one of the domains

11. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 9 wherein virtual PEPs of a main PEP are provisioned to provide resource services.

12. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 10 wherein the virtual PEPs are provisioned to provide services in a different domain.

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13. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 12 wherein separate PEPs, each from a different domain, are provisioned to the same service by a PDP.

14. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 13 wherein two separate PEPs, each from a different domain, are provisioned to the same service by a PDP.

15. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 14 wherein the PDP is in one of the two domains.

16. (ORIGINAL)   The method as defined in claim 14 wherein the PDP is in a third domain.